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The Review of Religions

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بسم اللہ الرحمن الرحیم

نحمدہ ونصلی علی رسولہ الکریم

In the name of Allah, the most Beneficent and the most Merciful.
We praise Him and invoke His blessings upon
His exalted Prophet.

" A Prophet came unto the world and the world accepted him not, but God shall accept him and establish his truth with mighty signs."

AHMADIYYA COMMUNITY AND THE PUNJAB GOVERNMENT.

By Hazrat Khalifatul Masih, Head of the Ahmadiyya Community, Qadian.

Those members of our Community who have been reading, or hearing my sermons, would know that the notice served on me, in connection with the Ahrar *Jalsa*, was objected to by me, on the ground that the circular letter which had occasioned the said notice, had not been issued by me, but by the *Nazir Umoor-i-Amma* (Secretary for Home Affairs); that Government policy indicated by a notice served on the *Khalifa* of the time, for an action of one of the secretaries, was likely seriously to prejudice the functions of the *Khilafat*; and that the action of the Government was

*[Translated from Urdu—*Ed.*]

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maintain the spirit of competition and progress and at the same time it recognizes on principle the 'right' of the poor in the wealth of the rich, and levies on the Capitalists a royalty, *viz.*, 'Zakat,' at the rate of $2\frac{1}{2}\%$ to be paid to the State which is expended for the benefit of the poor. This is the only middle path between Capitalism and Communism, that can maintain the balance between individual progress and national welfare.

12 Interest.

Islam also prohibits the giving and taking of interest. By this wicked institution huge trusts and syndicates are formed, which monopolize the sources of national wealth and consequently wealth cannot be evenly distributed among the people.

13 International Peace.

Islam has also laid down rules for the settlement of a modern problem, which is threatening to destory world-peace, *viz.*, international disputes. The Holy Quran taught the Moslems a formula to settle international disputes 1350 years ago, which the West has achieved now, at the acme of its civilization. It laid the foundations of a nucleus which contemplates a body like the present League of Nations. The Quran says that as soon as there are indications of disagreement between two nations, the other powers instead of taking sides with one or the other should at once serve a notice upon them to submit their differences to the League for settlement. But if one of them refuses to accept the award of the League and prepares to make war, the other nations should all fight against it. The unsatisfactory condition of the present League and its apparent inertia, are due to the violation of this important international principle of equity.

14 Women's Rights.

The Holy Prophet was the first person to uphold and safeguard the interests of women. He was indeed the greatest benefactor and emancipator of women. He raised the social and economic status of women and gave them an honourable

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place in society. He was the first person to give women the right of private ownership, the right of vote, and of freedom in divorce.

15 Polygamy.

The institution of polygamy is considered a vice and an injustice to women but it is not so. Polygamy is not obligatory, since it is allowed only under extraordinary circumstances, for instance, after a war when the sex ratio is upset or in case of permanent disease, barrenness, or insanity of the first wife. G. B. Shaw on being asked by G. S. Viereck, "Do you advocate monogamy" answered, Monogamy is imposed by the economy of nature which more or less equalizes the birth-rate of the sexes. If a war upsets it, you will have polygamy without question in ten minutes. The Mormons were the most narrowly strait-laced monogamic moralists on earth, but when they had either to multiply rapidly or be wiped out by their presecutors in Missouri, they were almost instantaneously converted to polygamy, in spite of their horror, when their Prophet, first broached it to them."

16 Purda System.

The Purda system (the wearing by women of a veil) is also instituted to save women from physical and moral harm. Moslem women are not expected to remain confined indoors. Islam allows them to go out, and move in society, take part in games, continue studies and join men, in social, economic and educational persuits, but it disallows their promiscuous intermixture with men in clubs, balls, etc.

17 Abolition of Liquor Habit.

Another great marvel of the Holy Prophet's spiritual power is the abolition of the habit of liquor consumption in Arabia which he accomplished in only 24 hours. America also passed the law of prohibition to save herself from the evils of liquor, but it was a total failure. The cause of that failure is obvious. U. S. A.

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lacked the spiritual power to reform this age-long habit of the people. It could only impose legislation by force, which simply encouraged crime. This shows that morals of a whole nation cannot be reformed by acts of parliament. It is only Prophets of God, and not politicians and philosophers, who can bring about great upheavals in the social and moral conditions of man.

18 Slavery.

Muhammad was a great emancipator of slaves as well. It is a fact that the institution of slavery was not originated by Muhammad. History tells us that slavery existed in Arabia and the rest of the world, centuries before his advent. He only reformed it and placed it on a sound footing. A simple proof that Muhammad was not a supporter of slavery is that dozens of slaves joined his Movement, at a time when his followers were bitterly persecuted and they consequently suffered great hardships for him, so much so, that some of them gave up their lives but did not relinquish his faith. Space does not permit me to go into the details of this vast subject but I hope this internal evidence will be sufficient to prove that Muhammad was sincerely loved by his slave converts.

19 S. P. C. A.

Muhammad's beneficence and mercy were not limited to human beings alone, since he was equally merciful to 'our dumb friends', *viz.*, animals as well. The Westerners are establishing S. P. C. A., in the Dominions and it seems a new institution but the Holy Prophet established laws for prevention of cruelty to animals 1350 years ago. He exhorted the people to attend to the needs of 'our dumb friends' and prohibited his followers from branding the horses and mules on the face. Similarly, on one occasion he stopped a few young men from making target of a live hen which was bound down. Muhammad was indeed a blessing for the whole world.

G. B. Shaw on Islam.

I think it would not be out of place to mention here the

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glowing tribute paid by G. B. Shaw, the greatest living authority on Socialism, to Muhammad and the future of Islam. In an interview at Bombay, during his recent tour of the Orient, he is reported to have said "I have always held the religion of Mohamed in the highest esteem because of its wonderful vitality. It is the only religion, which appears to me to possess that assimilating capability to the changing phases of existence which can make itself appeal to every age. The world must doubtless attach high value to the predictions of great men like me. I have prophesied about the faith of Mohamed, that it would be acceptable to the Europe of to-morrow, as it is beginning to be acceptable to the Europe of to-day. The Medieval ecclesiastics, either through ignorance or bigotry, painted Mohammadanism in the darkest colours. They were in fact trained to hate the man Mohamed and his religion. To them Mohamed was Anti-Christ. I have studied him—the wonderful man and in my opinion, far from being an Anti-Christ, he must be called the Saviour of humanity. I believe that if a man like him were to assume the dictatorship of the modern world, he would succeed in solving its problems in a way that would bring it, the much-needed peace and happiness....."

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MUHAMMAD, THE MODERN PROPHET—I

By Khan Bahadur Abul Hashem Khan Choudhury, M.A.

"O Lord, Shower Thy Mercies upon Muhammad and upon the followers of Muhammad even as Thou showered Thy Mercies upon Abraham and upon the followers of Abraham; verily Thou art the Possessor of Praise and Glory." "O Lord: Shower Thy blessings upon Muhammad and upon the followers of Muhammad even as Thou showered Thy blessings upon Abraham and upon the followers of Abraham; verily Thou art the Possessor of Praise and Glory."

A Holy Brotherhood

The above are the words of the benediction which goes up to Heaven at all hours of the day and night from the hearts of a grateful people. For, this benediction forms part of the daily prayers which every Moslem has to perform at least five times a day. And as day follows night in a perpetual swirl round the earth, the prayer ascends in an unceasing stream to the throne of the Almighty, invoking His mercies and blessings upon the Best of Men—Muhammad—a distinctive privilege shared by no other of the children of Adam. And not an invidious distinction; for Muhammad to us symbolizes a type, the type of the Perfect Man, the highest tribute offered by the grateful Earth to its Glorious Maker. In him we all have our part. He is the best representative of the race. He has demonstrated the acme of the spiritual possibilities of man. Any praise offered to him does not therefore detract from the just dues of others. Rather, honour to the representative means honour to the race and to all its members. When therefore we praise Muhammad, we *ipso facto* praise Jesus and Krishna and Buddha and the whole galaxy of illuminated souls who have led benighted humanity from darkness towards light. In fact, we sing a hallelujah to

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ourselves and to the race. For, we feel that we are not strangers, that we are related to him. If he has gone before us and attained to the Elysian heights of Glory, praise be to God. We are his kinsmen, His Glory will have its reflection in us.

Let us therefore banish from our hearts all thoughts of partiality. You make no distinction between the Prophets, says the Quran. They are a common brotherhood all. Disrespect to one means insult to all. Praise to one means honour to all.

Precepts Actualized in Life

"Describe to me the character of the Prophet," asked one of the disciples of Ayesha, the beloved wife with whom the Holy Prophet is said to have left half of his teachings. "Have you not read the Quarn," answered the noble lady, "and what is the Quran but a pen-picture of the Holy Prophet!" Thus the Holy Prophet to us is the personification of Islam, a concrete embodiment of the principles from the airy nothingness of the perfect idea—on earth unseen or only found to adorn the poetic page. Here is a real living man, palpitating in flesh and blood, awake to the problems of the work-a-day world, who nevertheless radiates truth, peace and joy.

Multifarious Aspects of Life

Such is the man whose memory we adore. And it will do us good. For the more we know of him the more will we recognize him to be our Kin, the Great Model which it would be worth our while to imitate. But to study him is difficult. For where is the vision which will comprehend at a glance the whole of this mighty Himalayas! At least we can consider only particular aspects of his character and try to build up laboriously a working model for our everyday use. Like the climbers of the Mount Everest we must approach him with reverence and earnest preparation and then too we shall be foiled time

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and again in our attempt to reach the summit. But blessed is he who perseveres, for sure enough his efforts will be crowned with success.

Historicity

Now there are innumerable aspects of this Great Life, each of which will invite and repay a most careful and life-long study. For example, the historicity of the Holy Prophet is a unique trait, which is shared by no other life ancient or modern. Born and bred among illiterate people, how is it that we find recorded every detail of his life which is worth knowing. Incidents of the battle-field, incidents of the forum, incidents of the friendly assembly, incidents of the dining-table and even incidents of the bed-room have all been recorded and preserved with such succinct details as set the students of history simply wondering at the richness and plenitude of the material at his disposal. Surely the Divine Disposer of events must have meant that whatever else in the world might perish the memory of this Man must not die from the minds of men.

Practicality

Then there is the aspect of practicality. Here is a teacher of the "Middle Path" who never preaches what no man can ever practise, who by being unlettered escapes the gossamer expositions of airy philosophy, whose strong point is a sturdy common sense, who never loses sight of the realities of life and is ever true to the kindred points of heaven and home. He has been mistakenly criticised as indifferent to the arts. He indeed decries the artificial school of poets who do not find this world beautiful enough and would employ their fancy to build one more beautiful and perfect. He however approves of the realistic school of poets who find a divine beauty and perfection in this world of labour and travail, where the sun, the moon and the stars hold their never-ceasing round and trust and faith, warm our homes and give us happiness and joy and strength of sacrifice.

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Simplicity

There is also the aspect of simplicity, of freedom from conventionality and cant. Here was a King who mended his own shoes, who was his own servant, whose time at home was spent in assisting his wives and in the discharge of domestic duties, who is reported to have left the injunction: "Listen to me, again, listen to me, simplicity in life is a part of faith." Here was a religious teacher who was above a meticulous regard for forms. He is reported to have said: "Sometimes it happens that I stand for prayers and wish to make it long, but the sound of some child's cry reaches my ears and the thought that I might be inconveniencing the mother makes me cut short the prayer." This is perhaps a confession which very few of our present-day teachers will make bold to admit. There is also the report from Anas that the Holy Prophet would sometimes offer his prayers with shoes on—a thing considered outrageous in the present-day. In fact here was a leader who was never a slave of prestige.

Practical Success

Then again he may be considered in the ligt of actual achievements. Here was a Prophet who created a nation. Out of the sands of the desert, so stark and naked, which repelled the sight by its sheer sterility and nakedness, he created a new firmament of stars, in which disported kings, law-givers and statesmen, warriors, conquerors, governors, philosophers, teachers, doctors, seers, sages and saints, in fact, a complete host of new orbs which altogether changed the face of the globe; a transformation unique and unexampled in the whole history of the race. And if humanity has faild to keep up to that height and has sunk to the level of the sands again, he has left with us the secret that will repeat the old magic and effect the retransformation whenever occasion will arise.

Such and similar aspects are the fitting studies for the historian and the philosopher. To me the aspect which has the greatest appeal is the "Modernity" of the Holy (peace and blessings of God be on him). He is the teacher of the day. He is the leader of the hour. His banner is the rallying point of all good souls. His name is the watch-word of open victory.

(To be continued.)

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MUSLIM CULTURE UNDER THE CALIPHS

(By Barlas)

In drawing a parallel between British and Mughal rule in India, in our last number, Barlas showed how a few generations of Islamic influence had transferred the rude Tartar Nomads of Central Asia into the humane and cultured race which conquered India under Babar. In the present sketch of the manners, customs and interests of the communities which looked to Bagdad as a metropolis in the tenth-eleventh century, the same writer shows the effect of Islam in creating a splendid and luxurious civilization among the Semitic tribes of Iraq.

For a description of the elaborate and complicated civilization of Bagdad under the Caliphs at once accurate and vivid, neither the dry as dust chronicles of traditionalists like Tabari in his *Chronicle* or Hilal in the *Book of the Vaziers* afford material. Between these records and the vivid but fanciful narrative of the *Alif Laila*, whence the Western world gets its ideas of that fascinating period, there is fortunately a middle way which is furnished in the very human memoirs of Abu Ali al-Muhassin al-Tanukhi, a Qadi or Judge who administered justice in the colourful era which began with the murder of Mutawakkil (peace on him) and ended with the establishment of Buwaihid rule. Fortunately for modern students of the history of that fascinating period of Islamic history, al-Tanukhi was a diarist, who realized that his reminiscences might have value as a record of contemporary history, and accordingly collected them in the form of the fascinating work entitled *Nishawar-al-Muhadarat* or *Jami-ul-Tawarikh*, and which "collection of chronicles" has been rendered into English by the well-known Arabic scholar Dr. Margoliath, under the title of "the Table-talk of a Mesopotanian Judge."

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A Vivid Picture.

Just as it is possible to get a far more vivid and in many respects accurate idea of the life and times of the English Restoration from the diaries of Evelyn and Pepys than from the dry-as-dust histories of Stubbs and Lingard, the lively anecdotes of the Bagdad Qadi, shrewd and intelligent as he evidently is, clothe the Vaziers of old Bagdad with flesh and blood, and give the modern student a very vivid idea of the mode of government, by an elaborate and specialized bureaucracy, the customs and mode of life of the period, and also let him into the secrets of the administration, and record the history of the rise to power of certain great families. To one of these great bureaucratic families, Tanukhi evidently belonged, and in relating the anecdotes told him by many of the great administrators of the time, he takes us behind the scenes as vividly as, in modern times the memoirs of certain indiscreet English statesmen, or their still more indiscreet wives, have done.

Bureaucratic Government.

We have spoken of the administrative system under the Caliphate as a bureaucracy, and very like our modern bureaucracy it was. Power centred in the hands of great clerical families, belonging to a learned rather than a Military class, though many of them were great administrators and soldiers and not merely slaves of the desk. We hasten to add that admission to the Bagdad Civil Service was not through open competition but through nomination, often of a rather adventurous kind. Here is an example of the rapid rise of one of the ablest of the Vaziers of Bagdad, Ubayyadullah bin-Yahya who served Mutawakkil in that capacity. The cause, al-Tanukhi's narrative tells us, of the promotion of Ubayydullah was Mutawakkil's requiring a lad of one of the clerical families to draft in his presence certain documents. The Caliph had recently abolished the Vazirate and the practice was for the heads

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contrary to its own practice in dealing with other communities whose Heads were not held responsible for the actions of individual members.

An exchange of views with the Government, in this connection, has been going on, and I had occasion to refer to it in the course of my sermons. And now, for the information of the Community, I announce that the Punjab Government have admitted that the responsibility for the circular letter—the subject of the notice—does not lie with the Head of the Ahmadiyya Community, and that if, at the time of issuing the notice, Government had been aware that the circular letter had been issued by the *Nazir Umoor-i-Amma*, Government would not have issued notice to the Head of the Community, asking him to withdraw the said circular letter. The Government have also admitted that the circular letter in question had indeed been cancelled before the issue of the notice, and that if Government had known about its cancellation in time, no notice would at all have been issued. The Government have also admitted that the issue of the notice did not in any way imply that, according to the Government, the Head of the Ahmadiyya Community had been responsible for any kind of civil disobedience or for taking part in any subversive movement.

Besides satisfactory communications of this kind from the Punjab Government, the Under-Secretary of State for India also has written to Maulvi A. R. Dard, Imam of the Ahmadiyya Mosque, London—who, by the way, had been instructed by me to direct the attention of the British Government to this matter—to say that the British Government had been assured by the Indian Government that nothing was farther from the mind of the Punjab Government and its Officials than

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of bureaux to present reports to him presently. Summoned to the presence of the Prince of all Believers (on whom be peace) Ubayyadullah, we are told " being attired in clerical style with *quber*, sword-belt and bonnet of staff entred the royal appartment.

The Royal Accolade.

When Mutawakkil saw him, he stretched out his hand to the nape of Ubbayyadullah's neck and gave it a mild cuff. Ubayydullah grasped the hand and kissed it. This made a favourable impression on the Caliph, and presently Ubayyadullah began to present documents to the Caliph as Vazirs did. This naturally aroused jealousy, and one day, a royal chamberlain, on some trivial pretext, beat Ubayyadullah with twenty lashes. "Ubayyadullah attended the next day as usual but limped in his walk. Mutawakkil asked what had happened to him and was told the facts . . . Mutawakkil now ordered that Ubayyadullah should receive a robe of investiture on the following day, that no Chief of Bureau should present any deed to him personally, but that all should entrust their documents to Ubayydullah for presentation to the Caliph . . . Ubayydullah now became so powerful that on his own authority he removed the name of Wasif from the datings and inserted his own in its stead." In spite of his rapid rise, this same Ubayydullah was very able administrator, and the Caliph's rapid advancement of this officer was probably due as much to his capacity to discern ability in a young aspirant to official honours as to any whim.

A Magnanimous view.

For if the Caliphs could advance men suddenly and disgrace them with equal arbitrariness, they could discern ability and make use of it, even when the possessor was personally disagreeable to them. As witness this story of the Caliph Wathiq (peace on him) and the Minister Mahomed bin

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Abd-al-Malik al-Zayyat. Before he became Caliph and in his father's time Caliph Wathiq conceived a dislike of the Minister Abd-al-Malik because of some slights to him by that officer, and on one occasion Wathiq told one of his attendants, " You are my confidential servant . . slay him the moment I become Caliph. Do not ask for further orders but bring me his head." But when Wathiq became sovereign, he ordered each of his Ministers to compose a letter announcing Mir Kasim's death and his own accession to the Caliphate. Abd-al-Malik straightway wrote a fine letter and presented it. The Prince of all believers approved of the letter and before Abd-al-Malik left the Wazir's presence he had been confirmed in the Wazirate. When asked by the attendant who had been told to kill Abd-al-Malik what were his orders now, the Caliph said, "let me till you that *that the Sultan needs Mahomed him Abd-al-Malik more than Mahomed needs Sultan.* So let him alone."

Strict Legality.

An instance of how the Caliphs, possessing as they did, the highest spiritual as well as temporal authority, could subordinate their personal interests to the law is told in a very significant story of the Caliph Mu'tadid (on whom be peace) and his official the Qadi-Abu-Hazem. On one occassion the trust property belonging to certain orphans was seized by the revenue officials of the Sultan, under his authority. The Qadi went to Mu'tadid and complained of this, to which the Prince of Believers replied : "This (the father of the orphans) was an official who has embezzelled my money and owed me large sums due from parts of my private estates of which he was in charge ; his debts to me are double the value of the property which he left." The Qadi replied that this claim required evidence to support it ; in the meantime as the property belonged to the man at his death it could not be taken from his heirs. The Caliph was silent for a time, meditating, and then he called for

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an ink-horn and himself made out an order of release for the properties.

Ordered Government.

Al-Tanukhi's anecdotes are full of instances showing that the administration at Bagdad was no irresponsible despotism but constitutional government, regulated by law, to which the Prince of Believers and his Ministers, no less than the most insignificant of his people, were subject. The administration was in the care of specialized bureau, having charge of different departments and districts, there was a well-organized secret service department ; the army was disciplined and had a well-arranged commisariat department; finance was organized on what approached to modern lines. One anecdote tells of the examination in bankruptcy of a merchant and his offer if he were permitted to continue trading to pay up his debts by instalments.

The Laws of War

There seems to have been a much more intelligent understanding of the rights of bellegerent enemies and the obligations of humanity in war than European countries possessed up to comparatively modern times. In this connection al-Tanukhi relates the history of how a hostile general owed the annihilation of his forces to an outburst of popular indignation caused by his violation of one of the primary laws of human warfare, respect for women of every nationality in occupied countries. Let Tanukhi's informant al-Khalil bin Ahmad al-Sijistani, Qadi of Sijistan, tell the story himself :—

> "There came against us, he said, the commander of the army of Khurasan, sent by Nasr b. Ahmad, with a numerous host; he made himself master of Sijistan, and his followers did much mischief in the land. They laid violent hands on the women in the streets. The inhabitants crowded to me and to another jurist (al-Balkhi gave his name, but I forget it), and complained of this state of affairs. We went with them to the general, whose presence was entered by myself, the jurist, and a number of leading men of the country. The jurist was

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first spokesman, and he spoke earnestly to the general, telling him what was going on. The general said to him: Shaikh, I could not suppose you to be so silly. I have with me some hundreds of thousands of men, whose wives are in Bokhara. They have to make substitutes of the women here, as best they can. I cannot make them disaffected to me by prohibiting them. So get out. We came away, and the crowd asked us what the commander had said. The jurist repeated the exact words.—When they heard them, they said: This reply of his is criminal, and an incitement to crime, and open violation of God's Command. Are we justified in fighting him on account of it?—The jurist said: Certainly, you are justified in fighting him. They said: Then have we your permission? You have, he replied. The crowd hurried off, while we slunk away from the distance. By the time of the sunset prayer not a man of Khursan remained in the place. An innumerable host of the inhabitants had assembled, and slaughtered a vast number of the men from Khurasan; this slaughter proceeded, and the house of the general was pillaged. They wanted to kill him, but he escaped on his horse, with as many of his followers as succeeded in making off, fleeing headlong. Never again did an army come to us from Khurasan.

Broadminded Culture

The picture al-Tunukhi presents of life in Bagdad in the third and fourth centuries of Islam is not altogether confined to civil and military administration. He has much to say of the amusements and social activities of the splendid and luxurious society which gathered round the court of the Caliphs, where assembled brilliant poets, scientists and men of letters. Unfortunately Dr. Margoliouth is a savant rather than a man of letters, and his rendering of Arabic into English verses is not always felicitous. The spirit of the following Epistle of Abn Ali al-Hatmi's epistle to an eminent man is on the spirit of Horace's *Justum ætenacem propisiti virum.*

His thoughts are plans, his menace punishment;
His promise safe; sure his encouragement.
His words wise adages, his home a fane;
His glances boons: his gifts profuse like rain.
Gladly would men his excellences count;
They find their words fall short of the amount.
But should they try his marvels to conceal,

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God and men's honour would the same reveal.
And some would be forsooth his rivals ; they,
Whose earnest is inferior to his play.
Yet how could deed be matched or height attained
Which reason cannot grasp nor fancy strained ?

True Religion

No picture of the life of the period would be complete which did not show people, ruler and officials as deeply religious, and with a broad-minded and humane piety entirely free from the *odium theologicum*. Witness this tale of the pious porter of Baghdad (no relation we hasten to note of the adventurous porter who carried home the marketing of the then adventurous ladies in the *Alif-Laila*. This porter must have been decidedly an original character, for the chronicler tells us of him that " he would not carry for persons unconnected with the court ; he would carry to the extent required to earn him a bare living and no more." Truly a contented soul. Of this pious porter al-Tanukhi's friend tells us. One day (said Tha'lab) I followed him, without his knowing that I was behind, and I saw him put a foot on the ground and say "Praise to God," and lift it and say " I ask pardon of God."—I asked him why he did this. He replied : " I am between favours of God and sins. I praise the Almighty for His favours and ask His forgiveness for my sins ! " Desiring to test him, I said to him : What say you of 'Ali and Abu Bakr—which of the two was the better ? He replied : When the rolls are unfolded and the balances set up, shall I be asked about my sins or about the rival claims of Abu Bakr and 'Ali ?—I said : Certainly about your sins.—He said : My soul gives me enough concern without finding out which was the better of the two.

There are a good many Muslims to-day of much more exalted status than Tanukhi's porter who would do well first to cast out the beam that is in their own eye before they seek to pluck out the mote in the eye of another.

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ISLAM AND CONCUBINAGE

(By Maulana Sher Ali, B.A.)

In reply to a letter from Sheikh Faiz-ud-Din Ahmad in England in which he asked the following two questions—

(1) Does the Quran sanction the keeping of female slaves only during the state of war or also during the time of peace?

(2) Is there any limit to the number of such female slaves?

Maulana Sher Ali wrote as follows:—

I received your letter, dated 23rd of November, 1934 last week and am sorry I could not answer by the return air mail owing to certain unavoidable circumstances.

I have also received a letter from Mirza Muzaffar Ahmad inviting my attention to your aforesaid letter.

I am very glad to learn that you are writing a thesis on "Muslim Private International Law" for the degree of LL. D., and I wish you all success.

You have asked me concerning the law of Islam about the system of concubinage. Your letter indicates you have read the "*Sirat Khatamun-Nabiyyin*" by Hazrat Mirza Bashir Ahmed, M. A., of Qadian, but it is curious to note you have not found answers to your questions in that book which deals very comprehensively with the question of slavery in Islam in all its bearings.

If you go through pages 174—236 of the said book, you will find the subject thoroughly discussed in all its necessary details with a special note at the end dealing with the so-called concubinage in Islam.

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You have also referred in your letter to the commentary of the Holy Quran by Maulvi Mohd. Ali, M. A., of Lahore. I am, however, sorry to say I do not endorse the views expressed in this commentary about the law relating to concubinage. Maulvi Mohd. Ali's idea may certainly be praiseworthy inasmuch as it is a pious effort to defend Islam against what Maulvi Mohd. Ali seems to consider to be an irrefutable criticism of Islam by the West. But it is not the truth. Islam does indeed allow entering into marriage relationship with women taken prisoners in war. But this permission is hedged in by certain important conditions and limitations which may be summed up as follows :—

1. That there should be a state of war between Muslims and non-Muslims (*vide* Surah VIII, 67).

2. That this war should have been aggressively provoked by the non-Muslims (*vide* Surah II, 190).

3. That the non-Muslims should resort to the practice of enslaving Muslims taken as prisoners and entering into marriage relations with Muslim women prisoners (*vide* Surah XVI, 27).

If the above conditions exist, Islam permits Muslims to treat female war prisoners of the enemy in the same manner as the enemy treats them. But this treatment has the following limitations :—

1. That it may not continue after the war has ended (*vide* Surah XLVII, 4).

2. That the Muslims should in no way show any aggresiveness in any matter whatever, that is to say, whatever they are forced to do should be done only by way of retaliation (*vide* Surah XVI, 127).

From the above it is clear that the system of entering into marriage relationship with female prisoners is now quite out of date. For, all civilized peoples now treat war prisoners as state prisoners and do not distribute them among their members for enslavement.

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This is why the greatest authority on Islam in the present age, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, speaks of the question of the so-called slavery and concubinage in Islam in the following words.

"It is a matter for great satisfaction that in these days the non-Muslims have given up the aggressive and tyrannous system of converting into slaves Muslim men and women taken as prisoners and therefore it is now not lawful for Muslims to enslave non-Muslim prisoners. The Holy Quran says, you are permitted to retaliate upon the enemy only to the extent to which their transgression extends. So now when the times have changed and the non-Muslims do not enslave Muslim men and women taken as prisoners, and on the contrary they treat them as state prisoners, it is quite unlawful and un-Islamic for Mussalmans to enslave non-Muslims" (*vide* the "*Chashma-i-Ma'refat*," by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, pp. 244, 245, foot-note).

This authoritative pronouncement which is based on a clear verse of the Holy Quran strikes at the root of the entire fabric of criticism raised by the non-Muslims in this connection.

As to the question why Islam allowed entering into marriage relationship with non-Muslim female prisoners may be noted that this retaliatory measure was permitted with a view to the following aims and objects :—

1. That it may serve as a check on the aggresiveness of the non-Muslims.

2. That if women prisoners are, in the absence of the system of treating prisoners as state prisoners, distributed among the members of the community, there should be an effective safeguard against demoralization of the prisoners and their custodians.

In view of the above, it is clear that there can be no limit to the number of female prisioners placed in the custody of Muslim individuals, for, it all depends on the

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circumstances of the war going on between the Muslims and the non-Muslims. It is an exceptional measure meant to meet special requirements, hence the question of limiting the number does not, and indeed cannot, arise. Whatever limitation may be, must be provided by the circumstances of the case and not by any statutory ruling. To sum up, I would say :—

(1) That truly speaking there is no system of concubinage in Islam.

(2) That Islam permits taking of those women as prisoners who take part in actual warfare against them and allows them to be treated as slaves if first, war is provoked by the enemy and secondly, the enemy resorts to the system of enslaving Muslim prisoners.

(3) That this temporary slavery must automatically come to an end with the cessation of hostilities and the establishment of peaceful relations between the belligerent parties.

(4) That even this system is now not permitted, for now the system of treating war prisoners as state prisoners has come in vogue and therefore it would now be unlawful for the Muslims to enslave, or enter into marriage relations with non-Muslim female prisoners, if any.

I would ask you to carefully study the chapter of the "*Sirat Khatamun-Nabiyyin*" Part II dealing with slavery pp. 174—236 which deals with the question in all its important details and quotes authorities wherever necessary.

From the study of chapter you will understand that the question of the so-called concubinage in Islam forms part of the major question of slavery and must be treated as such if a correct solution of the problem is desired.

If after the study of this letter and the chapter of the "*Sirat Khatamun-Nabiyyin*" referred to above, you should think that there still remain some questions to be answered I shall be very glad to help you on hearing from you.

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HUMANITY NEEDS A TEACHER

(By Mr. Ali Muhammad, M. A. (Edinburgh).)

*The Life of Muhammad (may peace and blessings of Allah be on him) possesses so many admirable features that one is at a loss as what to say and what not to say especially when he has been alloted a limited time. However to make the most of the opportunity that has been granted to me I would like just to mention a few facts regarding Muhammad, the greatest benefactor of mankind.

The unparalleld reformation that Prophet Mohammad (may peace and blessings of Allah be on him) was able to bring about within a short period of 23 years among a people steeped in gross immoralities and immersed in moral and spiritual torpor was due pre-eminently to this main reason that Prophet Muhammad (may peace and blessings of Allah be on him) had instilled in their hearts an all-absorbing faith in Allah, the Supreme Being Who is the Creator of Universe and Who in fact is the source of all our happiness and prosperity, a Being possessed of the sublimest attributes imaginable.

By his marvellous example of remaining steadfast in his unshakeable faith in Allah in spite of the bitterest opposition and most alluring temptations which any mortal had ever to face ; by his profound solicitude for the amelioration of the conditions into which his fellow-countrymen had been involved and above all by his established truthfulness and honesty on account of which he got the title of الامين "The trustworthy," by his humility which was the special characteristic of his character, his generosity, forgiveness, mercy and justice, in fact by all these factors he was able to infuse in his followers such a spirit that a small band of 700 were fully convinced that they could successfully resist the

*Paper read before a large and representative gathering held in Secunderabad to celebrate the Prophet's Day—*Ed.*

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to in any way injure the feelings of the Ahmadiyya Community whose loyalty was fully recognized. The Under-Secretary of State has further assured, in this letter, that the Government did not mean to slight the Ahmadiyya Community, in any way nor to show any disrespect to its Head. On the basis of these communications from the Punjab Government, and the letter from the Under-Secretary of State for India, I wish to announce that those parts of my sermons which were intended as a protest against the action of the Punjab Government, should now be considered to have been settled.

While making this announcement, I wish to record my sense of pleasure that many officials and ex-Governors both in India and in England have proved very sympathetic to us, on this occasion, and some of them while promising to extend to us their fullest support, have given strong expression to the sincerity of their feelings for us.

By making this announcement, however, I do not mean, that the objections we have raised against the many unjust actions of the local officials, or against the scope of the working of the Punjab Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1933, should also be considered to have been settled. These, however, are matters which as I have indicated in one of my sermons, can be settled privately with the Government or through the Council. In respect of these, therefore, we have no need to undertake action under any special organization. The real and important question which was a source of great concern for the Community was whether the Head of the Ahmadiyya Community could be vexed and obstructed by being held responsible for the actions of officials or members of the Community.

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united forces of all the peoples of the World and that no worldly power however great could vanquish them. What was the secret of this conviction? It was the indomitable faith which the Master Prophet Muhammad (may peace and blessings of Allah be on him) was able to infuse in their hearts.

Again it was this unconquerable faith which enabled the followers of Muhammad (may peace and blessings of Allah be on him) to spread the torch of Islam and the golden principle of Universal Brotherhood throughout the length and breadth of the then-known world. It was the very same faith which enabled the Muslims under the Caliph Omar to conquer the two powerful Empires, the Persian as well as the Byzantine.

Then again it was this certainty of faith which Prophet Muhammad (may peace and blessings of Allah be on him) had created in the minds of his followers which had enabled them to give up completely and fully the most detestable and abominable practices of infanticide, drinking, gambling, adultery and their age-long feuds and internecine warfare once for all. Nay, this certainty of faith was able to accomplish more than this; it not only enabled them to wake from their moral and spiritual torpor but to place them actually on a pedestal of moral and spiritual height unparalleled in the annals of the religious history of the world. Moses with all his miracles could not infuse that spirit of manliness and sacrifice which we observe in the followers of Muhammad (may peace and blessings of Allah be on him). Moses saved his people from the Egyptian tyranny through a miracle but Muhammad (may peace and blessings of Allah be on him) defended the city of Medina with his little band against 10,000 warriors by his heroic and soldier-like measures which a commander of any army would be proud to follow with advantage.

Now what lesson does this brief survey of Muhammad's career (may peace and blessings of Allah be on him) convey to us Muslims of the modern world? It implies

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that in this 20th century the same indomitable faith and the same burning zeal for the propagation of Islam could be acquired if only the Muslims hearken to the call of the Divine Messenger who in due fulfilment of the prophecy of our Master Prophet Muhammad (may peace and blessings of Allah be on him) appeared in the nick of time not only to save the barge of Islam from going to wreck but to pilot it aright so as to make it reach its destined goal of spreading the light of the Religion of Peace and Humanity and of Common Brotherhood to the four corners of the globe.

It was due to certainty of Faith which the founder of the Ahmadiya Movement and a servant of the Prophet Muhammad (may peace and blessings of Allah be on him) had infused in the hearts of his followers that they have erected mosques in America and Europe as well as in the Continents of Africa and Australia and have established a network of Missions throughout the world.

I may be pardoned for repeating what an inestimable treasure and most powerful weapon is it to possess certainty of Faith. It is an impregnable bulwark which no winds however furious, no thunder however loud, no vicissitudes of life however great, could influence his possessor in the least. It is such a precious jewel that nothing in the world could stand comparison with it. It is this certainty of Faith which alone tends to bring out our latent faculties to their perfection and enable us to perform deeds which appear almost super-human.

Is it not a matter of wonder that the Islam which 1,300 years ago brought about perfect union and love among those tribes and clans which always revelled in fighting against each other on trifling pretexts should not be able to work out that wonderful miracle even *now* among the various sects of Islam which are tearing asunder the mighty power which Islam once possessed. To bring about such a glorious unity among the various sects of Islam is a herculean task which only a divinely raised messenger could accomplish.

Muhammad (may peace and blessings of Allah be on him) knew that a time would come when the Muslims

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would follow in the footsteps of the Jews and the glorious treasure of Islam which he had accumulated at the expense of the sacrifice of a large number of his followers would be lost, at that critical period he prophesied the Promised Mehdi would appear to bring back that illustrious treasure and that pristine glory of Islam which illumined the world 1,350 years ago. In due fulfilment of that prophecy Hazrat Ahmad of Qadian appeared.

No doubt the celebration of the Prophet's Day every year infuses in our hearts a spirit to prepare ourselves to render some constructive service to Islam and to undergo hardships as Prophet Muhammad and his followers had undergone for the propagation of Islam but this praise-worthy and truly admirable spirit only lasts for a time.

We can remain infused with this beautiful spirit permanently only if our connection with Allah is established on a firm and solid basis. No doubt we have before our eyes the wonderful ideal of our glorious Prophet and no doubt we possess that incomparable treasure, the Quran, the like of which could not be produced in the world, but in spite of these two invaluable treasures I must say that if we reflect critically as well as impartially, laying aside all our prejudices, we will have to confess that we do need a personage who having completely merged his personality in that of the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be on him) should have acquired that certainty of Faith to perform once more a similar miracle of uniting the existing sects of the Islamic world into one real fraternity as our Holy Prophet Muhammad united 1,350 years ago the different tribes and clans of the Peninsula of Arabia into one unique brotherhood of which history cannot produce any parallel.

Blessed are they who while realizing the momentous significance of the Ahmadia Movement join its ranks to perform the glorious task which was nearest and dearest to the heart of our Prophet Muhammad (may peace and blessings of Allah be on him) of spreading Islam, the religion of Peace, and Universal Brotherhood throughout the world.

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DISCORDANCE IN THE BIBLE.

(By Mr. Abdur Rahman Chowdhary.)

The Christians, without any convincing reasons, consider the Bible to be of divine origin hence unique in character. But when we examine the truth of the above statement in the light of clear and convincing arguments, we utterly fail to find anything which should support this claim of the Christians. It is clearly incompatible with the divine character of a heavenly book to relate any incident in quite a different manner from that which it has already stated in a different place in the same work. Really the contradictions and discrepancies in the collection of books known as the Bible are so wide and marked that even its most rash apologists have demurred and hesitated to express their opinions as to the exclusive authenticity of any one of them.

I shall now proceed to select some passages from the book of books upon which the Christians rest their "eternal state" and which must serve them as a "lamp to their feet", and "a light to the paths of all his creatures," (Psalms cxix. 105) and will leave the reader to form his own opinion after carefully going through the following discordances in the Bible :—

Genesis XLVI 27	... Threescore and ten souls.	and	Threescore and fifteen souls, Acts VII 14
Exodus XII 40	... 430 years	...	400 years Acts VII 6.
Numbers III 39	... Total 22,000	...	Gershonites, 750. Kohathites, 8600. Meratites, 6,200. (total 22,300, Numbers III 22, 28, 34.)
2 Samuel VIII 4	... 700 horsemen	...	7,000 horsemen, 1 Chron. XVIII 4.
,, X 18	... 40,000 horsemen		40,000 footmen, ,, XIX 18.
,, XXIV 9	... 800,000 and 500,000 men.		1,100,000 and 70,000 men 1 Chron. XIX 5.
,, 13	... Seven years of famine.		3 years of famine 1 Chron. XIX 12.
,, ,, 24	... 50 shekels of silver		600 shekels of gold ,, 25

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1 Kings IV 26	... 40,000 stalls ...	4,000 stalls, 2 Chron. IX 25.
,, VII	... 20 measures of oil	20,000 baths Chron. II 10 or 150,000 gallons.
,, V 16	... 3,300 rulers ...	3,600 overseers, 2 Chron. II 18.
,, VI	... House, 30 cubits height.	Porch, 120 Cubits 2 III 4.
,, VII 15-16	... Pillars 23 cubits ...	Pillars, 35 Chron. III 15.
,, VII 26	... 2,000 baths ...	3,000 baths ,, IV 5.
,, IX 23	... 550 rulers ...	250 rulers, ,, VIII 10.
,, 28	... 420 talents ...	450 talents ,, 18.
,, XXI 15-16	... 3 lbs. of gold ...	300 shekels 8 lbs. Chron. IX 16.
,, XVI 15-16	... In the 27th of Asa, Omri began to reign.	In the 21st year of Asa, Omri began to reign. 1 Kings XVI 23.
,, 23	... In the 31st year of Asa, Omri began to reign, and he reigned for 12 years, and then he died; and Ahab his son reigned in his stead (28).	In the 38th year of Asa, began Ahab to reign. 1 Kings XVI 29.
2 Kings VIII 16	... Jehoram, King of Judah, began to reign in the 5th year of Joram King of Israel.	Jehoram, King of Israel began to reign in the 2nd year of Jehoram, King of Judah. 2 Kings I 17.
,, IX 29	... In the 11th year ...	In the 12th year 2 Kings VIII 12.
,, 26	... 22 years old ...	42 years old, 2 Chron. XXII 2.
,, XVII 1	... In the 18th year of Ahaz, (son of Jotham) Hoshea began to reign over Israel.	In the 20th year of Jotham, began Hoshea to reign. 2 Kings XV 30.
,, XVIII 9	... In the 4th year of Hezekiah the King of Assyria came up against Samaria and besieged it.	An the end of 3 years they took it in the 9th year of Hezekiah. 2 Kings XVIII 10.
,, XXIV 8	... 18 years old ...	8 years old, 2 Chron. XXXVI 9.
,, XXV 8	... 7th day ...	10th day, Jeremiah LII 12.
,, 19	... 5 men ...	7 men ,, 25.
,, 27	... 27th day ...	25th day ,, 31.
1 Chron. XI 11	... 300 men ...	800 men, 2 Samuel XXIII 8.
Ezra II 64	... The congregation were 42,360.	Total 29,818, Ezra II 3—60.
,, 65	... 200 singers ...	245 singers, Nehemiah VII 67.
,, 69	... 61,000 drams of gold	41,000 drams of gold.
	5,000 lbs. of silver...	4,200 lbs. of silver.
	100 garments ...	597 garments Neh. VII 70—72.
Neh. VII 66	... The congregation were 42,360.	Total 31,089 ,, 8—62.

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Psalm LXVIII 17...	The chariots of God are 20,000 ...	Zerah, the Ethiopian had 1,000,300 chariots. 2 Chron. XIV 9.
Dan. I 1	... In the 3rd year of Jehoiakim, came Nebuchadnezar King of Babylon.	In the 4th year of Jehoiakim, which was the first year of Nebuchadnezar King of Babylon Jeremiah XXV 1.
,, 21	... 1st of year of Cyrus	3rd year of Cyrus Dan. X 1.
Matt. VIII 28	... 2 men ...	1 man, Mark V 2.
,, XII 40	... 3 nights and 3 days	2 nights and 1 day, Mark XV 42.
,, XVII 1	... 6 days ...	8 days, Luke IX 28.
,, XX 29—30	... 2 blind men ...	1 blind man, Mark X 46.
I 17	... From Abram to Christ, 42 generations.	55 generations Luke III 23—34.
Mark XVI 5	... 1 young man ...	2 men Luke XXIV 3.
Luke IV 25	... 3 years and 6 months.	In the 3rd year, 1 Kings XVIII.
John XIX 14	... 6th hour ...	3rd hour, Mark XV 25.

Now what credit can be given to a book which contains such manifest contradictions. The accounts of the Gospels are specially confused.

Is it possible, in the light of these discrepancies to believe that the Gospels are written by persons who were divinely inspired ? And a book which is full of contradictions and inconsistencies cannot be a safeguide for mankind. This credit can only be claimed by Quran, the Holy Book of Islam. It is and has always remained totally free from all human interpolation Even prejudiced and biased Christian writers as Sir William Muir have admitted that the Quran which we possess now is, to the last letter, the same which was revealed to the Prophet 1400 years ago. This complete immunity of the Quran from human interference fulfils a great prophecy of the Quran and in fact conclusively proves its divine origin. The Quran says :– "Had it been revealed by a being other than God then they would have found serious discrepancies in it." The Bible cannot claim to be a safeguide for mankind because it is not free from later interpolations. The Vedas and Zend Avesta do not claim to have been sent for the whole of mankind and therefore naturally they, too, are not our safeguides. The Quran only remains. It claims to guide the whole of mankind for all times and it is and has always remained free from human interference. Therefore the clear inference is that it is the only book which must be accepted by mankind as their guide.

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NOTES AND COMMENTS

Annual Gathering of the Ahmadiyya Community

> "Almighty God has ordained that human spirits, living in different parts of the earth, in Europe or in Asia, such of them as are possessed of righteous inclinations, should all be drawn towards the one God, and gathered under the banner of one Faith."

This is how Prophet Ahmad, the Promised Messiah and Mahdi, explains the object of his great Mission. To fulfil this object among many other things he laid the foundations of a general Gathering of the members of his Community to be held every year at Qadian in the last week of the month of December. This Gathering which he inaugurated in 1891 has regularly been held every year in Christmas week.

Ahmadies flock from all over India and even from foreign lands to visit the place where the Great Teacher of the age was born, lived and worked and to listen to the learned lectures of the *ulema* of the Community, especially to the soul-stirring speeches of Hazrat Khalifa-tul-Masih, Head of the Community. In the Christmas week, gatherings and conferences take place all over the world but the Gathering which is held in this small town of Qadian, situated in a removed corner of the Punjab possesses a unique character and significance. The quintessence of all the speeches that are delivered at the occasion is, how the servants of God which have strayed away from the path that leads to the realization of the object of their existence can be guided back to it. It is in this Gathering that that Great Leader of men from whose words of mouth spoken casually the future religious reformers, jurists, statesmen, nation-builders and military geniuses will seek guidance, delivers, his speeches. This Gathering was held as usual on the 26th, 27th and 28th December and was inaugurated before a large multitude of men by Hazrat Khalifatul Masih, Head of the Community in a brief but very moving speech in which he said that the enemies of Ahmadiyyat seek to destroy it, but the Almighty God had decreed that no combination of its enemies would even succeed in arresting its increasingly rapid growth much less compass its annihilation. Speeches were given on subjects of such varied interest and scope as "The Philosophly of Muslim teaching,' Ahmad's prophecies regarding 'the Promised Son', 'Jesus' tomb in Srinagar—some recent investigations', 'God and Morals', 'The Institution of Khilafat', 'Islam in other lands', and 'Socialism and the Economic ideals of Islam'.

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The lecture of Dr. Mufti Muhammad Sadiq, D. D. was highly illuminating and interesting. The Doctor said that during his recent stay of about six months in Kashmir, writings and manuscripts have come into his possession which unmistakably show that Jesus Christ did not die on the Cross in Palestine but travelled to Kashmir where he lies buried in Srinagar in the Khan Yar Street. Dr. Sadiq is writing a book on this subject and we hope that when it comes out, very shortly as is hoped, it will throw a bomb-shell into Christian ecclesiastical circles. Mr. Nayyar's speech on the spread of Islam and the Ahmaddiyya Movement in many lands in which they were formerly unknown was indeed very encouraging. Mr. Nayyar graphically described how during the brief space of 20 years, from 1914 to 1934, the Ahmaddiyya beliefs and teachings have captured the imaginations of large numbers of peoples in countries situated as far apart as England and China, Afghanistan and Nigeria, America and Palestine. Even to the distant small islands in the Indian and Pacific Oceans said Mr. Nayyar, the banner of Ahmadiyyat has been implanted and the day will soon come, he added, when that tiny plant of which the seeds were sown in this small town of Qadian about 48 years ago by the Prophet Ahmad will develop into a huge tree giving shade and shelter to all nations of the world. Has not the world witnessed the realization of this hope in the rapid spread of the Ahmaddiyya ideas and ideals in all countries in the face of a highly mendacious propaganda and bitter opposition and persecution? Ch. Zafar Ullah Khan, Barrister-at-Law and member-designate of the Viceroy's Executive Council spoke on "Socialism and the Economic Ideals of Islam." There could be no better speaker selected to speak on this important and difficult subject than the Chaudhri Sahib and the clear, lucid and direct manner in which he dealt with it was simply incomparable. Professor Muhammad Aslam, B.A (Cantab.) spoke on "God and Morals" and argued that all morality and goodness that now exists in the world is the outcome of the labours of reformers who believed that they were commissioned by God to resuscitate and regenerate the morally and spiritually dead world. There could be no morals and no true goodness unless it is believed that there is a Being before Whom we are accountable for our deeds and actions. Great labour seemed evidently to have been expended on preparing most of the speeches which were listened to with great interest. But what created the most profound impression

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on the vast concourse of more than 20,000 persons and kept them spell-bound for more than three hours every day was the masterly oration given by Amir-ul-Momineen Hazrat Khalifa-tul-Masih on the second and third days of the Gathering. On the first day His Holiness dealt with the present Ahrar agitation against the Ahmadiyya Community and the second day's speech was devoted to an explanation and exposition of the "Revelations of the Promised Messiah." The latter speech was in continuation of the last year's speech on the same subject and it will continue next year also. His Holiness briefly referred to a few aspects of the Promised Messiah's revelations. When the speech is finished next year and is published, the world shall see what a great and valuable addition has been made to Islamic literature.

A separate women's conference was held. The *Associated Press* sent its special representative to Qadian to report the proceedings of the different sessions of the Gathering which we reproduce below:—

> The annual Gathering of the Ahmadiyas opened here to-day when some 15,000 people from all parts of India were present, including Chaudhri Zafrullah Khan, Chaudhri Muhammad Din, Revenue Member, Jaipur State, Professor Abdul Majid of Bhagalpur and Seth Abdulla Alladin. The Gathering was inaugurated by the Head of the Ahmadiyas, who welcomed the delegates and visitors. He referred to the rapid growth of the Ahmadiya Movement from an insignificant beginning.
>
> Large numbers of people are here in connection with the annual Gathering of the Ahmadiyas. Professor Aslam of Government College, Lahore, delivered an address on "God and Morals." Before a huge audience and in a tense atmosphere of excitement the Head of the Ahmadiyas strongly denounced the campaign of vilification of the Ahmadiya Movement and its founder which, he said, would have created riots but for the peaceful attitude of the Ahmadiyas. They would not seek revenge. He said that the Ahmadiyas were accused of blaspheming the Prophet but, he declared, they loved the Prophet and had done more than any one to spread his teachings in Europe, America and Africa. Their organisation was based on righteousness and peace. The Home Secretary on behalf of the Ahmadiya organisation denied that Maulana Zafar Ali's or any other person's life had been threatened by Ahmadiyas. Some 20,000 people attended the third day's session of the Ahmadiya Conference, a feature of which was a striking address by Chaudhri Zafurllah Khan on "Socialism and the Economic ideals of Islam." He criticised Mr. Gandhi's views on small industries and surveyed the arguments for and against the capitalistic and socialistic systems of society and said: "Islam effects a rapprochement.

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between the two by its teachings. The Islamic law of inheritance, its prohibitory injunctions against all interests, strikes and lock-outs, its creation of arbitration courts to decide, labour and capital disputes, its institution of legal alms and provision against natural calamities created a form of society which met all human and economic needs." Another interesting address was given by a former Ahmadiya Missionary in West Africa, who described the conditions of life there and the civilising effect of Islam. In his speech the Head of the Ahmadiyas referred to the great moral and spiritual awakening effected by the founder of the Ahmadiya Movement. The object of the founders' mission was to promote amicable relations among various communities, establish religion on a firm basis, raise the suppressed communities, bring about a union between East and West and gather all nations under Islam's banner.

A women's conference was held separately.

Virgin Births

The doctrine of the Virgin Birth of Jesus is the corner-stone of Christian Theology. The Muslims with a few dissentients have also always subscribed to the view that Jesus Christ was born without the agency of a father. That this extraordinarily novel belief is not born of superstition but is based on facts of history will, we hope, form the subject of a well-thought-out article shortly to be published in this journal. For the present we quote from the *Aryan Path* of Bombay an extract which is relevant to the doctrine of the virgin birth of Jesus and is highly interesting and useful. Dealing with the subject of virgin births Sir Alexander G. Cardew in the said journal says :

> In Greek legend Perseus, the rescuer of Andromeda, was born of the virgin Danae whom Zeus visited in the form of a shower of gold when her father had confined her in a brazen tower. Minos, the mythical king of Crete, was also the son of Zeus by the virgin Europa, whom the god in the form of a bull carried off to Crete. The same prolific deity was also the father of Herakles, one of the most famous of Greek heroes, and Dionysus was his off-spring by "the hapless Semele," who was destroyed by the lightning of her lover. In Turkish legend, the ancestor of the race, Budantsar, was miraculously conceived by a Mongol widow, and a supernatural birth was even attributed to the famous conqueror Jenghiz Khan. Hebrew story narrates how Abraham's wife, Sarai, conceived her son Isaac in extreme old age, through the favour of Jehovah, and the great champion of the Israelites, Samson, had a similar history. India is not without somewhat similar legends. According to one story, Vyasa, the celebrated collector of the Vedas, was born of a fish. The Sage, Visvamitra, is

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And as this question has been definitely settled, the Community need have no concern, just now, about the other questions.

As some local Ahmadiyya communities are sending resolutions of protest, therefore, they are hereby informed that as this part of the matter is settled, no local organization need now pass any resolutions on this subject. Indeed it has never been our intention to come into conflict with the Government ; nor do we approve of vanity ; nor do we wish to humiliate any body ; nor do we regard it as just and proper to destroy the prestige of the Government so as to render difficult for it the task of maintaining the public peace. I am therefore sincerely pleased that this affair has been settled in this way, and I thank Almighty God for having afforded me the opportunity to devote all my attention to the attack which is being made on the Ahmadiyya Movement, on its religious side. And I trust that, in this fight, our Community, in fulfilment of its solemn pledges, and in view of the importance of the work before us, will spare no sacrifice, and will cheerfully bear all additional burdens which may be imposed on them God ! grant them the strength to do this.

And our last words are

Praise be to Allah

The Lord of the Worlds.

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said in the Vishnu Purana to have been conceived through his mother's eating a grain of rice of magical qualities. Raja Rasalu, the hero of the Punjab, owed his origin to a similar occurrence, and Gugu Pir, the Mahratta saint, was likewise fabled to have been conceived when his mother received resin and milk from the guru Gorakhnath. It is said of the Buddha that "he shot through the void as a six-rayed star and entered Maya's womb upon the right." Fo-Hi, the founder of the Chinese Empire, was the offspring of a virgin who ate a miraculous flower, and the great Emperor Yu was born of a girl who swallowed a pearl. Kiang Yuan, mother of Hauki, the ancestor of the kings of Kau, was a virgin who conceived through stepping on a footprint left by a god or a giant. In Siam, Codom was virgin-born, his mother being impregnated by sunbeams and a similar story is told in Japan of a maiden who slept by the shores of a lake and whose offsping thus conceived became the wife of a chief.

On the American continent, the Sia Indians relate that their hero, Poshaiyänne, was born of a virgin who conceived through eating some pinon nuts. The Aztecs attribute the birth of Quetzalcoatl to his mother's having swallowed a turquoise, and Montezuma, the hero of the Mexican Indians, was the son of a virgin who was impregnated by a summer shower. The Apaches, the Pimas and the Mojaves have the same story. Both in Brazil and in Samoa, we hear, of a young virgin who was fertilized by a fish and the Samoan saga also tells of a woman fructified by the rays of the rising sun. The Admiralty Islanders trace the descent of mankind from a woman who was thus fecundated. The Minahassers of Celebes claim to be descended from a girl who was impregnated by the west wind, and Hiawatha owed his birth to the same cause. In Africa the Hottentots hold that their divine ancestor Heitsi-eibib was virgin-born.

If we turn to northern Europe not dissimilar stories abound. The Celtic saint, Aidan, was born of a virgin into whose mouth a star fell while she lay asleep. In the Finnish epic Kalevala, the virgin Ilmatar is fructified by the east wind and gives birth to the wizard Vainamoinen. The mother of the Irish hero, Conall Cernach consulted a Druid who sang songs over a spring, and on her bathing in it, she became pregnant. Maba' Seyou, the saint, gave a woman some holy bread which proved so efficacious that after two years she returned with two children! This exploit, which is related in an Ethiopic manuscript of the fifteenth century, may perhaps be regarded as the *ne plus ultra* of such occurrences, the recital of which from all parts of the world tends to become tedious.*

*Those desiring further information, may consult E. S. Hartland's *Primitive Paternity*, which contains a vast collection of stories and an extensive bibliography.

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ISLAM THE GREATEST INTEGRATING FORCE

By Dr. M. S. Nawaz Khan M. B, B. S., Zanzibar

What is Islam ?

I would only give a brief sketch of the salient features and distinctive characteristics of our religion, which is known among us as "Islam", but is commonly and erroneously known in the West, as "Mohammedanism"—a name quite unknown to us. Islam means the religion of "peace" in the widest sense of the word, *viz.*, peace between God and man, peace between man and man, peace between a State and its subjects, peace between master and servant, peace between religion and science, peace between Capital and Labour, peace between husband and wife, peace between parents and children, and peace between different powers, nations and communities.

Islam is the religion of humanity in general. It means complete resignation and submission to God's will on the one hand, and doing good to one's fellow-beings, on the other. Islam is as wide in its conception as humanity itself. It was not originated by Prophet Mohammed (peace and blessings of God be upon him) since Islam was the religion of all the Prophets of yore, in its literal sense. It was of course perfected and given its present form by our Holy Prophet.

Evolution in Religion.

Like evolution in nature there has been, and should have been, evolution in religion as well. In the beginning when society was in its primitive state and man's mental faculties were yet "in-embryo" namely, unevolved and latent, elementary and simple moral codes were revealed to them. Later, with the evolution and perfection of man's mental and spiritual faculties, a

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complete and perfect moral, spiritual, ethical, social, economic and political code was revealed for the guidance of humanity in general, in the shape of Islam and the Holy Quran.

We believe that all the religious systems of the world had divine revelation as the common basis whence they originated, and that the holy founders of all the religions were inspired who should be duly respected. It is impossible that millions of people should adhere to a faith which had originated from an impure fountain. There is truth and beauty in every faith but Islam has assimilated all the beauties, that lay scattered in different faiths. It is like a tower of heavenly light, and it is common knowledge that it is essential to keep the side-roads well lighted in order to guide the people to that tower.

1 Peace Between Religions.

Islam has laid the foundations of peace and harmony among the religions of the world and has thus removed mutual dissension and discord, on account of religious differences, by commanding us to believe in the truth of all the Prophets of the world. Every country and every nation had a warner for a limited period of time, and later when means of communication were established between the different countries a common Messenger and Warner was sent to them, to gather the whole mankind under the banner of Islam, which recognizes no caste distinctions, no colour prejudices, and no sex bars, and which meets all the true physical and spiritual requirements of humanity

2 Historical Religion.

Another distinctive feature of Islam is, that it is a historical religion and its holy founder was a historical personage. The Holy Prophet was a perfect model for the guidance of human conduct in all the phases of human activity. He got opportunities to develop all his mental and instinctive faculties. For instance, his couduct was a model for the orphan and the

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poor, as well for a king, a general and a statesman. All the events of his life have been minutely observed and recorded with the greatest accuracy. The pristine purity of the Holy Quran is unchallenged, since its text has been handed over to us in its original form quite uninterfered with, both in letter and spirit.

3 God of Universe.

God of Islam is above all tribal deities and national gods. Our "Allah" is not only the God of Moslems but He is the Lord of the whole universe. This conception of the Divine Being has widened immensely the outlook of human sympathy and enlarged the circle of a Moslem's brotherhood. Like the sun which shines equally on the East and the West, on the yellow, the black and the white, on the savage and the ultra-civilized, a Moslem's beneficence and mercy know no distinction of caste, colour, creed, or continent.

4 Unity.

Another unique feature of Islam is its simplicity and its sublime ideal of unity. The Creator of the universe is One. He needs no helper, because He possesses all the perfect attributes and is free from all defects. His mercy, of course, reigns over all His other attributes. The universe, in spite of its immense varieties and diversities is subject to one and the same law and proves the influence of a great individual "mind" behind it, that designs, originates, controls and annihilates and recreates it. Even Sir James Jean, an eminent authority on astronomy is forced to admit, that "the creation of the universe must have been an act of thought and of thought in the mind of a mathematical genius".

5 Life after Death

Islam teaches us that life after death is a reality and it is only a continuation of this life. Evolution of the human soul will continue in the "hereafter" and man shall have to account for his deeds, for which a sort of atonement must be

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made. It is futile to imagine, that such a grand organization and such a vast starry creation, was placed at the service of man, so that he may live a few score of years, to eat, drink and be merry or make a few inventions and then perish, without having to be raised again, to account for his deeds.

6 Moral Teachings.

The scope of moral teachings of Islam is also wide. Islam does not lay particular stress on meekness only. It requires us to develop all the instinctive tendencies in us, and to utilize them with common sense and reason, on proper occasions. Its main object is to reform. If forgiveness will move a man to submission and reform, he should be forgiven, otherwise he is to be punished, in just proportion to the gravity of his crime.

7 Fraternity.

The Holy Prophet has established a world-wide fraternity, and a universal brotherhood and unity of mankind. Its democratic principles and cosmopolitan nature, are well known to all. Islam abolishes all invidious class distinctions and thus sounds a death-knell to all race prejudices, and superiorities based on caste or colour alone. Its only criterion of superiority is virtue and service to humanity. Islam does not foster "untouchability." We are never confronted with colour problems nor with sex bars. In a mosque, even a negro slave can stand shoulder to shoulder with a king, and a slave is to be fed and clothed in the same same way as his master. Islam has taught and in practice has achieved a complete equality of mankind. Lewis Brown says, in his book, *This Believing World* :— "The supreme gift of Islam was the ideal of unity, which it drilled somehow into the heads of a hundred races— not merely the unity of God but even more, the unity of mankind."

8 Reverence for Authority.

Another distinctive feature of Islam is its reverence for authority. In spite of this fraternity and equality of rights, we

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are commanded to have reverence for authority. The first lesson that we are taught in the nursery is obedience to the proper authority. We are expected to remain peaceful and loyal to the government under which we live. Islam condemns all such movements as civil disobedience, terrorism and social boycott, as well as rebellion and anarchy.

9 No Compulsion.

The Quran does not allow compulsion in religion. Islam attaches more importance to purity of heart than actions alone. Purity of heart depends on the purity of thought and belief, and it is clear that thoughts and belief cannot be changed by force. Hence compulsion in religion simply promotes hypocrisy and not purity of heart. If Islam was spread by the sword it could not purify the hearts of its followers, nor could it get devoted, self-sacrificing adherents. Is it not a fact that the number of Moslems in China, where there has not been a single Moslem ruler, far exceeds the number of Moslems in Northern India, where Moslems have ruled for centuries ? Islam only allows the use of weapon in self-defence, never for propagation of faith, nor for love of booty and plunder.

10 Duty of State.

Islam enjoins upon the State to co-operate with its subjects and help the poor and the needy. It is the duty of the Government to provide maintenance for all its subjects, *viz.*, food, clothes, housing accommodation and employment. The State can compel idlers to work, except, of course, the crippled and the unfit, for whom she must adopt 'dole-system'. Islam has offered this formula to settle the growing disputes between 'Capital' and 'Labour,' and between 'Imperialism,' 'Nationalism' and 'Bolshevism'.

11 Peace Between Capital and Labour.

Islam favours neither 'Capitalism' nor 'Communism.' It recognizes the importance of private ownership in order to

The Ahmadiyya Movement

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THE Ahmadiyya Movement was founded by Hazrat Ahmad, the Promised Messiah and Mehdi and the expected Messenger of all nations. In the spirit and power of all the earlier prophets he came to serve and reinterpret the final and eternal teachings laid down by God in the Holy Quran. The Movement therefore represents the true and real Islam and seeks to uplift humanity and establish peace throughout the world. Hazrat Ahmad died in 1908, and the present Head of the Movement is his second successor, Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, under whose direction the Movement has established Missions in many parts of the world, the following being the addresses of some of them:

(1) THE LONDON MOSQUE, 63, Melrose Road,
Southfields, London, S. W. 18, England.

(2) THE AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT IN ISLAM,
Sufi M. R. Bengalee, M.A.,
56 E, Congress St., Suite 1307,
Chicago, Illinois, U. S. America.

(3) THE AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT,
Commercial Road, Salt Pond,
Gold Coast, West Africa.

(4) THE AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT,
Rose Hill, Mauritius.

(5) THE AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT,
25-27, Alof Street, Okepopo, Lagos,
Nigeria, W. Africa.

(6) THE AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT,
Box No. 305, G. P. O.
Perth, W. Australia.

(7) THE CENTRAL (E.A.) AHMADIYYA
MUSLIM ASSOCIATION,
P. O. Box No. 554, Nairobi
(Kenya Colony.)

(8) MAULVI ABUL 'ATA, Maulvi Fazil,
Sharial Burj, Haifa, Palestine.

(9) MAULVI RAHMAT ALI, Oetœsan Ahmadiah,
Defensielijn V/d Bosch, No. 139, Batavia Centrum, Java.

(10) MAULVI MOHD.SADIQ, H.A., Oetœsan Ahmadiyya
Padang—(Sumatra.)

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